

GLOBALIZATION OF DEMOCRATIC PARTICIPATION AND SELF-GOVERNANCE VERSUS GLOBALIZATION OF OLIGOPOLISTIC MARKETS AND TOTALITARIANISM

Globalizacija demokratske participacije i samoupravljanja nasuprot globalizacije oligopolističkih tržišta i totalitarizma

APSTRAKT Rad preispituje pomodnu temu "globalizacije tržišta" u svetlu više vekova dugog procesa nasilne ekspanzije kapitalističkih društvenih odnosa u svetskim razmerama. U njemu je fokusirana aktualna kulminaciju ovog procesa u neo-liberalnoj strategiji privatizacije manje od 500 vlasnika kontrolnih paketa akcija najvećih transnacionalnih industrijskih korporacija i finansijskih institucija. Prikazane su razorne posledice primene ove strategije. Rad takođe kritički preispituje "realno-socijalistička" negativna iskustva "diktature nad potrebama" tokom dvadesetog veka. Ukazuje i na pouke koje se mogu izvesti iz jugoslovenskog samoupravnog iskustva za sadašnje i buduće pokušaje ponovne konceptualizacije alternativne post-kapitalističke strategije društvenog razvoja na lokalnom, nacionalnom, regionalnom i svetskom planu. Na temelju ankete sprovedene među studentima društvenih nauka 1999, 2000 i 2001, godinama kritičnim za transformaciju dominantnih društvenih odnosa u SR Jugoslaviji, u radu se na kraju ispituju stavovi ovih potencijalnih vođa javnog mnjenja u lokalnoj zajednici prema osnovnim tipovima strategija društvenog razvoja. Polazeći od ovih iskustava, biće predložene mere kako da se, na osnovu oslanjanja na neka pozitivna iskustva i izbegavanja negativnih, izvrši mobilizacija širokih slojeva stanovništva za učešće u donošenju strateških odluka o prioritetima održivog društvenog razvoja na lokalnom, nacionalnom, regionalnom i globalnom nivou.

KLJUČNE REČI globalizacija, privatizacija, socijalizacija, totalitarizam, participacija, samoupravljanje

ABSTRACT The paper re-examines the fashionable theme "globalization of markets" in the light of the several centuries long process of world-wide violent expansion of capitalist social relations. It focuses its present culmination in the neo-liberal policy variant of the capitalist strategy of privatization by less than 500 controlling package owners of the biggest supra- and transnational industrial corporations and financial institutions. Presented are the devastating consequences of the implementation of this strategy. Paper further critically re-

examines the XXth century "real-socialist" negative experiences of the "dictatorship over the needs". It points out some lessons that can be learned from the Yugoslav self management experience for the present and future attempts at the re-conceptualization of the alternative post capitalist strategy of social development at the local, national, regional and world level.

KEY WORDS *globalization, privatization, socialization, totalitarianism, participation, self-management*

Aims and theoretical framework of the study

The main objective of this paper is to examine the principal past and present globalization strategies in order to draw practically applicable conclusions about probable and/or desirable future globalization process scenarios' development.

On the elementary level of communication, it is necessary to begin with clarification of the interpretation given to the key concepts applied. It is the beginning hypothesis of this paper, derived from the sociology of knowledge, that the existence of three main types of interpretations of the key social science concepts like globalization, as well as the existence of three main suggestions for strategic practical political activity that are more or less directly deduced from these theoretical interpretations, are socially structured. Their presence therefore is not the effect of the imperfect state of the social science knowledge that will be overcome through a quantitative accumulation of new information. It rather presents the expression of socially structured opposed social interests of respective interpreters or social actors.

Concept of social actors is here used in the meaning of social groups having objectively confronted interests to maintain their privileged or to improve or radically transform their unfavorable place in social division of labor and of the accompanying social relations of exploitation and repression, that present advantageous or adverse social condition for satisfaction of their material and spiritual needs. When consciously identified and differentiated from the interests of opposing social groups, these interests are often articulated through different development conceptions of desirable perpetuation or structural changes of the global system of social reproduction organization. Contrary conceptions are the expression of mutually exclusive interests of the ruling class to reproduce itself in the privileged social position, and of the subordinated classes to improve their position in social division of labor or to abolish the class monopoly to planning, commanding and controlling work functions (Vratusa (-Zunjic) V., 1983).

Formulation of development strategy is one step further in the operationalization of development conceptions into development goals as well as in

planning, combination and mobilization of available human and material resources for phased realization of these structural changes. Development strategy also encompasses political organization and coordination of the activity of social actors oriented towards the same development goals, on the one side, and the blockade of the activity of social actors having opposite social reproduction organization form for their development goal, on the other.

Globalization in this paper is interpreted as the objective social process of development of worldwide social interaction, resulting from the confrontation of social actors interested in the realization of opposed subjective projects of the preservation, revision or radical transformation of the actually dominant historically specific form of social life reproduction relations' organization on the planetary level (Vratusa (-Zunjic), Vera, 2001a).

The main social carriers of these opposed concepts and strategies of globalization are affiliates of the small bourgeois intelligentsia that has a contradictory role in the class division of labor. Intelligentsia is socially underprivileged, on one hand, since it presents the direct producers of the systems of ideas, deprived of the direct material power of control over the life reproduction conditions. It is, on the other hand, privileged, since it presents the private owners of the expert power, acquired through the system of socially selectively accessible university level education, to discover and implement the most efficacious technical means for the attainment of goals (im)posed from the social sphere external to positivistically interpreted science. Thanks to such ambivalent position in social division of labor, affiliates of this social category have relatively larger maneuvering space to choose social actor in the service of whose interests they will put their expert power (Vratusa (-Zunjic), Vera, 1995a). From this depends whether they will become ideological representatives of the transnational, national or comprador bourgeoisie, that in the particular realm of its power holds the monopoly to the ruling functions in the class division of labor, or they will attempt to come over to the standpoint of the direct producers, reduced to the executing functions. Both possibilities indicate the complexity of the mediation between the real social position of the individual in social structure, his or her self-understanding of this position and transposition of this understanding into everyday behavior.

Using this sociology of knowledge hypothesis as the intrinsic and qualitative criterion for the classification and analysis enables the identification and understanding of the socially structured reproduction of the confrontation of social actors fixed upon the conservative, reformist or radical alternative conceptual theoretical frameworks and globalization strategies.

Conservative conception and strategy of globalization is determined by the interest of trans- and supra-national capital in the institutionalization and conservation of the social relations of capital accumulation in the planetary

proportions. It is characterized by neo-social-darwinist and neo-liberal advocacy of the allegedly necessary, inevitable and the most desirable planetary domination of the free and allegedly self-regulating market flows of merchandises over politics. Neo-liberal variant of the conservation of capitalism strategy includes complete and immediate privatization of ownership relations, opening of national market, liberation and the intensification¹ of the merchandises', capital's, people's and information's market flows from the national state's regulation, elimination or minimization of price subventions, public services and social security programs, focusing on the individual interests and weakening of the role of trade unions through the "shock therapy".²

The ambivalent interests of the national and small bourgeoisie mark reformist conception and strategy of globalization. They are attempting to benefit maximally from the "positive" effects of globalization processes and to minimize those "negative". The important difference in comparison to conservatives is the attempt of reformists to avoid excessive growth of impoverishment of population and diminish risk from its destabilizing effects, through the national state's application of the adequately conceptualized economic development policy in the long-term national interest.³ Reformists however are also convinced that the economic inequality and opening to foreign capital are necessary conditions of economic

¹ Such conservative policy increased further the share of inter- and trans-national financial transactions on the world burses in the gross domestic product, especially in the last quarter of the XXth century. However, only recently was attained the distant prewar 1913 level of the international economic integration through trade, investments and financial transactions (Bond, Patrick: 2001).

² According to partisans of conservative concept and strategy, economic efficacy would be enhanced through the survival of the most economically, politically, psychologically and culturally capable for the competition on the free global market. Promoters of integration in the "megatrends of globalization" are rejecting economic policy of social redistribution in favor of economically underdeveloped regions by the national state, because it would according to them damage the competition efficacy through increased transaction costs of the administrative regulation of production.

³ Neo-keynesian partisans of the reformist conception and strategy of globalization insist on the institutionalization of the "social market economy", relying on one's own internal reserves, delayed opening of national market after the period of state support to improvement of the competition capability of domestic economy, and stimulation of the regional cooperation on the basis of complementarity of economic structures of national economies in the given regions of the global economy.

Reformists criticize the imposition of the one sided and damaging economic policy of the quick and complete liberalization and privatization resulting in the profitable enterprises' and big production, distribution and consumption systems' sell-off to foreign capital at the rock bottom prices, promoted by transnational capital organized in IMF and WB, and its often corrupted local mouthpieces. They promote permanent education, responsibility and autonomous participation of the employed in the high technology intensive enterprises, as the means for the innovative increase of competition capability.

progress. Reformists would only like to control or at least mitigate locally the most adverse effects of globalization processes, staying however within the logic of the capital accumulation.

The alternative radical concept and strategy of globalization is reproduced by the interest of its neo-marxist and other leftist oriented supporters to consciously intervene in the planetary violently expanding process of capitalist transformation of all not-capitalist means and relations of production⁴, especially during ensuing systemically generated depression crises and wars⁵. The projected aim of intervention of self-conscious and organized revolutionary class is to subjectively support one of the objectively possible tendencies of historical development - transformation of the capitalist society of alienated private owners and sellers of commodities on the market, into socialized humanity of emancipated collective owners of essential production means and self-managed controllers of their life sustaining exchange of matter with the natural environment.

Confronted globalization strategies in the global and local social context

Methodological precondition for the attainment of the complex research purpose of this paper is to pursue the study of different social actors' globalization

⁴ Marx's 1848 explanation of the intrinsic imperative of capital accumulation to expand in planetary proportions, presents classic definition of globalization: "Bourgeoisie can not exist without continuous revolutionization of the production instruments, that is of production relations, and accordingly of the entire social relations. To all previous industrial classes, on the contrary, the first condition of existence was the maintenance of the old mode of production. The bourgeois epoch differs from all earlier epochs by the permanent revolutionization of production, by the constant shaking up of all social strata, by the eternal insecurity and everlasting movement...The need for ever more spacious markets on which it would sell its products, chases bourgeoisie over the entire globe of the earth ... Through its exploitation of the world market, bourgeoisie gave the cosmopolitan character to production and consumption of all countries ... Instead of the old local and national self-sufficiency and enclosure, comprehensive communication and many-sided mutual dependency of people marches in..." (Marx, K., Engels, F., 1974: vol. 7, p. 383)

More than a century later, some social scientists have described, but without immanent explanation, the same phenomena of intensification of social relations on the world plane, interdependently connecting distant regions and peoples. They labeled this phenomenon by the fashionable new term - globalization. Like the earlier fashionable term modernization, the new term underlines evolutionary and quantitative aspect of the process.

⁵ These cyclical crises and destructive wars arise according to them from the immanent contradiction between potentially unlimited possibilities of social production forces of work to produce use values for satisfaction of human needs, evolved through market competition of individual commodity producers to reduce their production costs and increase relative surplus value, on the one side, and the limited private motive of capitalist production of exchange values for profitable selling on the market and resultant tendency of the average profit rate and the payment capable demand to fall, due to extremely unequal distribution of social production results, on the other.

strategies on many levels. Among them at least two must not be omitted since the protracted XV century. One of them is the global inter-state level of world capitalist economy. The other is the local level of particular global society politically organized as a strong or a weak national state (Wallerstein, I., 1974). Due to paper space limitation, this two level investigation, amended by the regional level analysis of Central, Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, will be limited here to the brief summary of the relevant findings of the turn of the century period analysis carried out so far.

Global systemic crisis and neo-liberalism

The social, economic and political state of the humanity at the beginning of the XXI century is marked by the culmination of the latest hyper-accumulation of capital systemic crisis, due to among other factors to increasingly unequal distribution of world income. Already by the end of the seventh decade of the XX century were exhausted the profit rates' raising impulses, brought about by the Second World War destruction of the "surplus" capital and merchandises that could not have found payment capable demand, and "surplus" workers that could not have found gainful employment ever since the 1929 depression (Vratusa (-Zunjic), Vera, 1993a).

Representatives of the supranational and transnational corporate and financial capital have found the temporary instrument for transferring the entire costs of the new crisis to the direct producers, through the neo-liberal dismantling of the post World War II welfare national state's reconstruction and development redistributing interventionism in the West, and centrally planned command economy with a dense net of state budget financed social services in the East. Both right and left parties that came to power in the West since the eighties promising tax cuts, and in the East since the nineties promising inflow of fresh capital, systematically applied these economic policies of de-regulation.

TNC and financial oligarchy concentrated in former colonial and present neo-colonial Western powers, and economically organized within international institutions like International Monetary Fund, World Bank and World Trade Organization, began the major reshaping of the international monetary and financial system in 1971. Instead of fixed currency exchange rates based on gold-reserve US dollar and low interest rates on long-term predominantly public credits, they introduced fluctuating exchange rates. Since 1980 they sharply increased interest rates on predominantly private short-term credits, derived from recycling of OPEC "petrol-dollars" that Arab ruling classes deposited in Western banks after they created the cartel of oil producing countries during one of the armed conflicts with Israel. "Seven sisters" or seven largest western transnational oil companies were thus

enabled to take over the oligopolistic control and speculative rising of oil prices, contributing to the deepening of economic recession. In this unfavorable economic situation, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB), transnational financial institutions in whose paid-in capital the US Treasury has the largest share, conditioned the extension of new credits to already indebted countries of Latin America, Asia and Africa and increasingly of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, by implementation of imposed macro-economic "structural adjustment programs (SAPs)".

The main content of SAPs was forced privatization. Less than 500 owners of majority share packages in supra- and transnational industrial corporations, financial institutions and mass media establishments imposed mass privatization policies, in alliance with the local comprador and corrupted elements ready to participate in this sell out of national wealth and exploitation of their respective societies, for a handful of dollars on their private accounts in foreign banks. Public enterprises, infrastructure and services, pension, health and education funds were privatized, state budgets frozen, wages and social subsidies extremely reduced. Wherever it was implemented, privatization worsened life and working conditions through decimation of redistributing state social programs and drastic reduction of rights of workers and their trade unions. Mass layoffs and unemployment increased competition of relatively well-educated labor, reducing its cost on the glutted and "flexibilized" increasingly global labor market. Simultaneously, the prices of basic foods and services increased⁶, as well as criminality, corruption, feeling of fear, insecurity, apathy and a pessimistic world outlook (Summary of contributions to ESA 2001 D&SCRN session III, 2001). Even George Soros, a billionaire who appropriated his wealth through financial speculation, is quoted by April 4 *International Herald Tribune* to have admitted that extending the market mechanism to all domains has "potential of destroying society".

SAPs of official and commercial creditors, force debtor countries as well to lift tariff protection of domestic industry and other strategic assets and deregulate capital flows. At the same time TNC and financial oligarchy retains protectionist measures in the creditor countries, in which are seated headquarters of their transnational companies, against imports of goods and immigration of people from debtor and other countries.⁷ Such retention of strong financial and other support from "mother" government is contrary to neo-liberal recipes transnational corporate and financial oligarchy is imposing to governments of weaker states, practicing thus

⁶ Wherever it was implemented, including California, US, privatization and deregulation did not bring promised possibility to choose between more suppliers and thus get lower prices. On the contrary, it led to several times higher prices and worse supply, imposed by regulation or dictate of private monopolies and oligopolies (Hoeftle, John, 2001).

⁷ In May 2002 EU complained to WTO because US introduced taxes on the imported steel.

cynically a double standard policy. In fact economic history of all contemporary industrially most developed countries, confirms that a favorable regulatory environment provided by the national state, including trade barriers, were crucial for protection of infant industry from cheaper imports in the early phase of industrialization. Precisely this double standard policy exposes the totalitarian character of the corporate-led globalization strategy, imposing particular interests of the strong capitalist states in the form of allegedly universal rules only to the weak states.

Conservative neo-liberal policy variant of capitalist globalization strategy of TNC and financial oligarchy made it possible for the "institutional investors" like privatized pension and social security funds, holding great money reserves, to speculate on the electronically globalized stock exchange. From this resulted fictitious blowing up of the nominal value of extant financial claims several times above the present levels of the world's combined domestic product estimated in terms of valuation of really produced and traded goods and services in the last decade of the XX century (LaRouche, Jr., Lyndon, 2000). Financial-speculative "bubbling" and deliberate "financial manipulation" of market forces, led to the 1997 depletion of hard currency reserves and plunge of Asia's currency markets, followed by spectacular devaluation of currencies in Russia, Latin America and Turkey, but also in Australia, Canada, even Japan, and equally spectacular rise in dollar denominated debts. According to World Bank report, total debt of Latin American, African and Asian debtor countries in 1980 was \$645 billion. After paying \$1,613 of cumulative interest, foreign debt of these countries grew to \$4,137 billion by 1999. Subsequent to speculative assaults on national currencies, forced devaluations and imposition of the unfavorable terms of trade, that all provoked fall in industrial production and bankruptcies in targeted economies, IMF "rescue" or bailout plans enabled Western banks to take-over local financial systems and Western corporations to appropriate local productive assets at low prices. They demanded immediate disposal of the "bad" bank loans and breaking up of prominent industrial complexes to be auctioned off at distress prices to foreign private speculating creditors. On top of cheap new acquisitions, creditors were reimbursed also through newly contracted credits. The money for them came from the treasuries of G7 countries and heightened public debt. The guarantors became the very same private banks who had precipitated the financial crisis and exacerbated it through speculation in the first place, thus benefiting from the IMF imposed bail out program. The end result is "conquering" of foreign countries without the invading army (Chossudovsky, Michel, 1999).

Continued speculative derivative trade on the major bourses by financial oligarchy, finally had struck the headquarters of their companies. Financial crisis in 2001 led to dramatic meltdown of trillions of US dollars of "paper profits" of major companies on the world stock markets. This was accompanied by hyperinflationary

rise in primary commodities' prices, bankruptcies of big companies like ENRON, mass layoffs and to impoverishment of population even in the core region of the world capitalist economy.

Global systemic crisis and neo-imperialism

Ongoing global financial and monetary crisis that easily might prove even deeper than during 1929 Great Depression, confirmed again that neo-liberal policy variant of capitalist globalization strategy imposed by transnational corporate and financial oligarchy did not and can not solve the systemic crisis of capital accumulation. The oligarchy was therefore driven to resort to the transformation of its defensive post World War II military organization, into an offensive neo-imperialist tool. The leaders of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states intensified the instigation of local wars in alliance with local separatist and terrorist groups. Their intelligence and other services financed, armed and trained these terrorist groups, while the mass media under their financial and other control presented these terrorists as freedom fighters and NATO aggression as the support for democracy and human rights. When these groups get out of control, US led NATO uses them as an excuse to set up military presence in strategic areas of the world to exploit local natural wealth and suppress social movements in the form of a permanent “war on terrorism”.

Militarism and state terrorism of big powers is used again as the ultimate tool for propping up of the declining corporate profit rates through violent opening of new markets, physical elimination of the competition and expansion of control over strategic territories, like oil rich Middle Eastern and Caspian region. The aim of this strategy is to procure as much of the world resources for excessive US national consumption that is rising with every passing day, while domestic US production is facing progressive decline, and the percentage of consumption covered by imports is steadily rising. The use of force is justified by the need to discourage all resistance in oil-producing countries to the flow of petroleum to the United States (Klare, Michael, 2001). Such military strategy of conquest overseas is accompanied by the totalitarian asphyxiation of civil society's rights through suspension of democratic constitutions at home, and both global and local destruction of environment through the polluting production, research, development, testing and implementation activities of the war-industrial complex.

Military imposition of the conservative concept and strategy of globalization by supra- and transnational capital is responsible for the fact that more than ten years after the Berlin wall fall, the hope for end of the Cold War between two economic and military blocks of countries is substituted by the new “Hot” wars and arms' race. After the Berlin wall fall, capital of multinational corporations and banks was

able once again to gain back the direct control over the vast economic space that was taken out of its reach after October revolution and Second World War, during the centrally planned attempt at speeded up industrialization.

Practically ever since the October revolution oligopolist western capital attempted to regain this control. Multiform military pressure of transnational capital and ensuing high defense expenditures, significantly contributed to the disproportionate development of military industry in the Community for economic cooperation and Warsaw military pact of former socialist countries and to their economic exhaustion. The efficacy of this external factor of the dissolution of the Eastern block became the greatest when Gorbachev rose to power within the Soviet Union. He was the first communist president who opted together with his cabinet not to claim the right and attempt to defend USSR, the COMECON and the Warsaw military pact, from disintegration. There was no more deterrence to NATO leaders' option to trigger of imperialist war campaign in order to secure control of cheap raw materials, working force, market outlets and industrial waste dumping grounds. Their targets this time were not primarily material and human resources of the overseas colonies, but the ones much closer. They are located in the territories of former "really existing socialist" European countries as their ideological representatives named them in early 1970s, that were largely inaccessible to financial capital behind the "Iron Curtain" until 1989.

This time the TNC capital of once again reunited Germany, joined forces with the Western capital while exercising "der Drang nach dem Osten" at the expense of Slave population, much like Hitler recommended in his main work (Hitler, Adolph, 1940: 154). The only difference is the fact that this new axis coalition is under the domination of the US capital. This domination enables USA military-industrial-financial complex to profit the most from aggression and joint rule in different parts of the world, exerted in alliance with militarily weaker Western European powers within NATO. Common interest in eastward expansion of allies having unequal power for the time being is stronger than disintegrative effects of their conflicting interests.

One of the most important strategists of the US foreign policy, Zbigniew Brzezinski, summed up the essence of the conflict between EU and US by asserting that it is imperative for US to maintain its world dominance by preventing any unification of Eurasia (Brzezinski, Zbigniew, 1997). Such open emphasis on the national interest of the US reveals the unsubstantiated character of the lately fashionable talk about the political globalization and the world state. As long as the capitalist relations are dominant social relations, the politically fragmented and polycentric international system of national states of unequal power is able to develop in the direction of the world government only in the form of the imposition of the hegemony of the economically, politically, culturally or at least militarily the

most powerful nation state within the integrated world capitalist economy (Vratusa (-Zunjic) Vera, 1995b).

Manifestations of the systemic crisis in Central and Eastern Europe before and after the Berlin wall fall

It must be stressed here that the dissolution of the COMECON in the late eighties was largely due to the internal contradictions of the centrally planned class mode of production of use values. It is labeled by the critics like Ferenc Feher, Agnes Heller and George Markus of the "Hungarian school" as "dictatorship over the needs", with specific economic aim function to maximize resources under the control of nomenclature (Feher, F., Heller, A., Markus, D., 1983).

Huge extensive mobilization of material and human resources in the beginning contributed to narrowing down of the historically inherited development gap between East and West. This underdevelopment legacy should not be reduced to the confession specific work ethic, but should be viewed in the context of neo-colonial relationship between the Eastern European big landowners and Western European merchants and bankers (Vratusa (-Zunjic), V., 1995c: 62-114). These inherited differences measured in terms of GDP per capita and its manufacturing sector component diminished. Qualitative indicators in terms of the human "capital" development often exceeded analogous indicators even in the most developed capitalist countries.

Highly developed sectors of heavy industry, public infrastructure, and especially ramified social services sector, however, began to be ever harder to maintain. As soon as the extensive phase of industrialization was over, namely, the protracted stagnation of productivity had set in. Stagnation even turned to negative growth rates in some countries of self-proclaimed really existing socialism in the late 1980s. This was due beside to worldwide recession, also to a destimulating system of social relations of production and distribution. This system is popularly summed up in a slogan "You can not pay me as little as little I can work". In the predominantly state owned and plan regulated command economies the crisis manifested itself as the insufficient production of goods for mass consumption.

Reintroduction of the elements of market stimulation of production during the New Economic Policy in the 1920s in USSR and similar economic reforms in all former socialist countries from the 1960s onward indirectly confirm the explanatory and predictive capacity of Mao's definition of "really existing socialism" as the restoration of capitalism (Vratusa (-Zunjic), V., 1993b: 381-411). Open privatization of the main means of production, distribution and communication completed the process of elimination of social relations' transformation brought

about through October Revolution and restoration of capitalist market competition of private owners of merchandizes separated one from another.

After having lost the COMECON market, the trade barriers in Western markets confronted the imports from former socialist countries. They received less financial help for structural adaptation purposes and less qualitative Western investment capital than their pro-capitalist leaders expected or promised to the voters. This assistance in the creation of a successful model society of parliamentary democracy and opened market economy, for the purpose of positive "demonstration effect", is reserved for only few countries of former real socialism, incidentally having as well predominantly catholic population like Hungary, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia (see the picture). The ruling blocks of Western countries only to these countries gave beside capital also the favorable trade conditions. Even in these exceptional circumstances, the annual growth of gross domestic product in Czech Republic came down below zero percent (-0.7%) at the turn of the millennia⁸. Social development indicators like the percentage of population on, or below the poverty line, became worse than before the symbolic Berlin wall fall.

Domestic ruling blocks in all other former socialist countries were and still are structurally not able to follow this "shop-window" neo-liberal economic development model even if they wanted to imitate it.



The local ruling class is becoming increasingly dependent on external creditors and international financial organizations controlled by transnational capital. This resulted in the steadily raising total foreign debt and the percentage of grants' and services' exports earnings out, flowing from the country for the debt service payment. The total debt was greatly inflated through precipitously heightened usury interest rates on credits for industrial development investments and import since 1980. Former socialist countries, much like former colonies, consequently became

⁸ All statistical data mentioned in the paper where no other source is quoted come from: World Bank, 2001a; 2001b.

very vulnerable to the imposition of the neo-liberal "structural adjustment" measures by International Monetary Fund and their local corrupted vassals. These IMF and WB imposed "economic reforms" led in many former planned economies, to wrecking of national banking system, to collapse of the economy and to acquisition of one part of public assets by the new Mafiosi predatory class committed to the quick profits through direct violent extortion or indirect plundering through speculation on a "free market".

Foreign investors and creditors contribute to the criminalization and corruption of recipient state's institutions. They bribe state officials to lobby for them during selling and concession giving tenders (Palast, Greg, 2001). The IMF and WB leadership conditions new financial injections into debtor countries by appointment of their former officials to cabinet posts. Government officials that thus become more accountable to foreign investors than to local institutions of electoral democracy formulate and execute institutional and legal reforms within deadlines set by the loan arrangements with IMF. Local parliaments just rubber stamp the laws drafted with the "financial and technical assistance" of the institutions like "The Center for International Private Enterprise" (CIPE), US Agency for International Development (USAID) or US Commerce Department. They are sponsoring establishment of specialized private enterprises for the management of privatization funds, evaluating the entire privatization job as "quite profitable" (Chossudovsky, M., 2001). Transnational financial oligarchy thus became absentee master ruling class, appropriating the national public patrimony and strategic banking, energy, mineral and freshwater management systems at the rock bottom prices (Poznanski, K., 2000).

Privatization of state property deprived at least 80% of population from the results of their decades' long work. Privatization of public services and cuts in the social welfare programs destroyed the social security nets. Together with the lifting of all protection to domestic production and currency, these measures led to dramatic fall in production and living standard of great majority of people in former socialist countries.

General decline of all development indicators provoked the reappearance of the widening East-West development gap, bringing Eastern European countries down closer to the level of the so called Third World countries, former colonies in Latin America, Asia and Africa. Like the Third World countries, former socialist countries are being increasingly reduced, through the process of forced de-industrialization, to the unprotected markets for Western manufactured goods as well as storage area for the contaminating waste material of Northern American and Western European industrially developed capitalist states. The unequal international division of labor ("comparative advantage" in the terminology of classic and neoclassic economic theory) is thus cemented. It leaves manufacturing industry and

the control of world trade, finances and communications under the monopoly of the central zones of world capitalist economy, ensuring the perpetuation of depressed prices of the primary products' and raw materials' prices.

In Russia this decline was among the sharpest - the negative average annual growth of GDP amounted to -6.1% during the last decade of the XX century. During the same period the life expectancy of an average male has dropped from 65 to 55, and infant mortality rate attained 16.9 per thousand live births in 1999 according to the World Health Organization data. The number of Russian citizens living on less than \$4 a day grew from 4 million to 147 million since adoption of the free market reforms. Instead of 100% elementary school attendance, now 10 million Russian children don't go to school. The suicide rate has doubled, alcoholism has tripled, old diseases, once thought eliminated like cholera, typhus, diphtheria, all have come roaring back. Bulgaria is another former socialist country in which the most disciplined implementation of all the tenets of the neo-liberal variant of capitalist globalization strategy, had disastrously damaged the welfare of ordinary citizens. The average annual GDP growth rate declined from plus 3.4% in the 1980-90 period to minus 2.7% in the 1990-1999 period. The dismantling of the public health-care system through privatization led to higher rate of mortality and suicides. The poorest families cannot afford any more to bury their relatives since the funeral services had been privatized, forcing some to use garbage container as the means for the dead body disposal (Angelov, Ivan, 2001).

Manifestations of the systemic crisis on the local plane – the case of Yugoslavia

The devastating consequences of the restoration of capitalist relations within the context of the global accumulation of capital crisis manifested themselves the most drastically in the multi-ethnic and multi-confessional Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. It was violently torn apart through combined disintegrating influence of internal deficiencies of the "self-management socialism", and of the external big powers' geo-strategic domination interests (Vratusa (-Zunjic), Vera, 1997).

a) Internal factors

One of the most important internal factors of disintegration were the unresolved contradictions inherent to Yugoslav hybrid planned and market "worker's self-management" economy operating under a unique social ownership structure. Contradictions of the social property that is neither state nor private, has the tendency to transform itself into group co-operative ownership. Introduction of elements of market regulation of extended reproduction in the mid sixties of the XX century in order to reverse stagnation tendencies of the command economy, led to

social differentiation. The self-management system in Yugoslavia lacked democratic control of major investment decisions at the federal level. The centrifugal forces influenced rounding up of republic economies. Differentiation between them was sharpened by geographic concentration of specific ethnic groups in regions with different levels of attained industrial development historically inherited from the time of the occupation by Ottoman and Austro-Hungarian empires. There was a marked difference between less industrially developed Republics, having the role of agricultural, energy and raw material producers in the center and south-eastern part of the Yugoslav Federation, and those more industrially developed final exporters, located in the north-west, closer to West-European markets. The second progressively began to object to the solidary redistribution of income in favor of the overcoming of the inherited development gap of the first, perpetuated through the price-scissors between agricultural and industrial products.

These centrifugal tendencies were strengthened and institutionalized through constitutional promotion of the Republics as administrative federal units or socio-political communities, into nation states. The rhetoric of democratization and decentralization of the decision making process was used to transform the renewed idea of independent nation states' building into the new legitimization ideology. Striving for the establishment of internationally recognized independent nation states implied abolishment of the constitutional status of the constitutive nation to the affiliates of the minority nation in a given nation state. The violent means for achieving this goal in the multinational country could have been expected and should have been prevented (Vratusa (-Zunjic), V., 1997b).

One part of the ruling class of collective owners of formerly nationalized and afterwards socialized private property of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia's bourgeoisie in all six Yugoslav Republics, began to search in re-privatization for the more safe form of self-reproduction in the privileged social positions in "their" federal units. The most entrepreneurial members of the party/state "bureaucracy" and economic "technocracy" in six Republics and two autonomous Provinces did not want any more to depend on the insecure mechanism of the ruling work functions' maintenance through the nomination to the command positions in all spheres of society by the top of the central party-state bureaucracy (Vratusa (-Zunjic), Vera, 1993c). The findings of the secondary analysis of the data collected in the last all-Yugoslav 1989/90 quality of life surveys can be cited in support of this thesis. According to these data, directors and politicians more often than other categories of respondents accepted the statement that "Private property is the basis of progress" (Vratusa (-Zunjic), V., 1995d).

The new ideology and the practice of half-legal and illegal privatization through signing of harmful agreements, devaluation and direct theft of existing social and state assets, was also strongly supported by the old and new "small"

entrepreneurs. They were transforming themselves over the night into ever-bigger capitalists in the conditions of war, inflation and gray economy. Affiliates of this new-old ruling class have set out to deprive the great majority of the social property's "co-owners" of their at least formal constitutional right, still existing in 2002, to the control of the means of production in social ownership as one of three equally valued forms of property.

Violent nature of the privatization process cannot be basically altered even through the "more just" but slower method of privatization through vouchers free distribution to all adult citizens. The voucher method could allow, however, if other protective measures were institutionalized, that greater part of national wealth remains in the hands of the domestic population and entrepreneurs. This is important since national bourgeoisie aspiring to creation of the national market basis for the accumulation of capital is systemically induced to implement some kind of social programs, in contrast to transnational absentee owners, always on the move toward the cheapest work force.

Significant parts of both technocratic and bureaucratic fraction of the former "nomenclature" as well as the nouveau riche new private businesspersons, however, are not developing into national bourgeoisie. They are predominantly oriented towards trade and speculative capital. They are ready to play in essence comprador role of mediation in the process of sell-off of national wealth and cheap local work forces' and raw materials' exploitation in the interest of multinational corporate and bank capital. The fact that comprador bourgeoisie facilitates transfer of national public wealth and resources to foreign investors, justifies Argentinean Nestor Gorojovsky in calling the "compradore" (Spanish: buying) bourgeoisie, the "vendadore" (Spanish: selling) bourgeoisie.

These fundamental counter-revolutionary changes restoring capitalist dominant social relations are taking place while direct producers are being brutally struck by high rates of open and disguised unemployment in the conditions of war, blockade, double-digit drop in production and accompanying drop in living standard, but increase in the poverty and diseases. Atomized, disorganized and divided along the qualification, income, gender, ethnic, regional, political and even trade union demarcation lines, they became easy pray for exploitation and domination from the side of the old and new power block. Probably some bad experiences concerning the inefficacy of only formal self-management in the past, also contributed to the fact that they did not resist strongly enough to the abolishment of their constitutional right to use and manage social property and to participate in decision-making (Vratusa (-Zunjic), V., 1999a). In the conditions of massive impoverishment, it is to be expected that everyday fight for bare survival becomes the main preoccupation of the majority of both employed and unemployed,

so that there rests little time for qualitatively higher demands for the participation in decision-making.

b) External factors

Even so weakened and deformed traces of collective property and production for solidary satisfaction of basic needs of the population that were inaugurated by revolutionary measures during and after the Second World War were not tolerated by the external factors of former Yugoslavia's violent disintegration. The imperialist powers needed to eliminate even the last remains of social and state property, as well as of at least formal constitutional self-managing rights, as the possible embryo of viable alternative, post-capitalist model of social relations' organization. Using the age old imperial policy "*divide et impera*", leaders of NATO member states contributed to the escalation of disintegrative internal tendencies into a civil war that acquired the form of ethnic and confessional armed confrontation.

Within the earlier described global context of the option by the ruling classes of the only military block remaining from the Cold War era, NATO, to seek the way out from the falling rates of profit crisis through implementation of overtly offensive strategy of expanding their sphere of resources' control over the European East and further toward Asia, lies the answer to the question why was Yugoslavia attacked the most violently of all former socialist European countries. Important element of the answer is contained in the fact that after the fall of the Berlin wall the ruling classes of the Western winners and losers of World War II, reunited under the domination of USA in NATO, needed Yugoslavia no more as the "window" of the West into the East, and of the East into the West. Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia comprising six federal units used to be the only country outside the big powers' blocks in the South Eastern Europe. Federal Republic of Yugoslavia constituted in 1992 as the state of continuity with the state that was one of the founding members of UN and as a community-union of the republics of Serbia and Montenegro open to all former Yugoslav federal units if they wanted to join, became also the only country in which a socialist party came to power after the historic turning point of the symbolic Berlin wall fall. It preserved the social ownership inherited from the self-management period as a constitutional category on the same footing with the private, state and other forms of collective property. In spite of wide discrepancy between normatively proclaimed socialist principles of social justice and democracy and real tendency of oligarchic distribution of social wealth and power, the ruling Socialist Party's legislation still guaranteed workers voice in the management of social enterprises. It also provided for preservation of certain advantages and empowerment of the employed in the process of "ownership transformation" or privatization. These advantages were at the least much greater

than those provided by the relevant legislation in former "real socialist" states of Europe.

The sovereign non-aligned Yugoslavia with strong social sector, widespread social safety network and considerable rights of its citizens to participate in determination of the direction of their economy, became an obstacle on the path of the eastward expansion of TNC and financial oligarchy's hegemony for the third time just in the twenties century. The embroil of an authentic alternative model of social organization of production had to be eliminated to make the way free for the uniform imposition of the IMF neo-liberal model. Expansionist forces had to conquer the control of Yugoslavia's important geo-strategic position of a natural and fertile Eurasian Land Bridge containing important water traffic arteries and mineral riches. To accomplish this aim NATO member States leaders used various pressure mechanisms. The entire chain of events was triggered off by debt interest elevation from the beginning of the eighties, imposition of "structural adjustment programs" and "shock therapy" that steered the socially owned enterprises into mass bankruptcies and further severed the economic and financial links between Yugoslav republics, dismantled federal fiscal and banking system, torn down social security institutions and aggravated ethnic resentments. The covert instrumentalization of so stirred nationalist, separatist, terrorist and criminal elements followed, together with the introduction of the economic blockade and "liberalization" of neighboring economies. Imposition of "macro-economic reforms" and privatization in the interest of transnational capital was finalized through the overt military aggression using cluster bombs and depleted uranium coated shells (Vratusa, Vera, 2001b), completed by military occupation of one part of the country, and neo-colonization of the remaining part.

Prospects for the implementation of the strategy of globalization of democratic participation and self-governance

The leaderships of several countries did not implement neo-liberal economic policy advocated and, wherever possible, imposed, by the transnational corporate and financial capital. They on the contrary preserved the neo-keynesian, nation state interventionist policy throughout the last decade of the XX century. The output in these countries, from China and Vietnam to Singapore, Sudan, Malaysia, Uganda and India, had average annual GDP growth rates above 6% annually.

High output growth rates are not necessarily connected with the general welfare of the population, and may be accompanied by high unemployment rates. The case of Cuba testifies to the fact that even small and poor island country with resolute leadership and people, can achieve much in terms of the general quality of

life of the population, practicing radical anti-capitalist and proto-socialist strategy, with the accent on the maintenance and development of the public social services. In Cuba the outstanding results have been achieved in the reduction of infant mortality rate to the level of 6.3 per thousand live births in 2000. This was achieved in spite of more than four decades long economic blockade and military pressure. They are being implemented by the USA administration in an attempt to restore capitalist relations of production in Cuba, including the extremely unequal distribution of national wealth that used to concentrate 71% of the land in the hands of just 8% of mainly North American landowners before the revolutionary changes. This low infant mortality rate compares favorably with those in many bigger and richer nations, including the United States, where the infant mortality rate in 2000 was 7.1 per thousand live births.

These data present the empirical evidence that alternative to the neo-liberal variant of the accumulation of capital globalization strategy is possible and already works.

The 1999 massive Seattle demonstrations of student and worker unions, environmentalists, non-governmental organizations and individuals against the World Trade Organization's totalitarian imposition of greedy double standard neo-liberal policy that increases inequality, poverty, hunger, death and pollution in the world, are often quoted as the turning point in the public opinion on globalization. Seattle demonstrations symbolize the reawakening of the global social movements searching for the alternative to the corporate-led accumulation of capital globalization strategy. Globally coordinating the mass campaigns against total domination of multinational over the international financial, banking and trading institutions in Bangkok, Washington, Okinawa, Melbourne, Prague, Nice, etc., these movements have reintroduced to the world political scene the demands for increased participation of the affected people in the decision-making concerning their lives.

The 2001 and 2002 conventions of the World Social Forum (WSF) indicate the trend towards the institutionalization of these movements. Instead of organizing just traveling protests to disrupt the undemocratic process of "negotiation" of free trade by oligopolistic institutions of the transnational corporate and financial capital convening in the North, like World Economic Forum in Davos, they have settled in the South, to debate through another, more just, democratic world of sovereign people participating in vital decision making. WSF brought together in Porto Allegro (Brazil) thousands of representatives of organizations mobilizing peasants, intellectuals, workers, young, women, ethnic, religious and other social and political activists of various theoretical and ideological orientations. They range from nationalist and social democratic reformers of capitalism, to revolutionary fighters for the abolition of all capitalist institutions. WSF hosts offered them all the experience of the participation of the neighborhood, school, municipal, regional and

thematic citizens' assemblies in the planning of the public budget. This already twelve years old practice in the state of Rio Grande do Sul governed by the Workers' party, presented a possible common inspiration for the promotion of the new real consensus of the citizens on the planetary level concerning the creation and distribution of wealth and public investments in social development priorities, through equilibrated combination of representative and direct democracy (Ferrari, Sergio, 2000).

The demands for participation and even more radical demand for self-management, that presupposes abolishment of private profit as the dominant economic function and (re)-establishment of social ownership of the main means of production, have been voiced in Yugoslavia as well. The preliminary findings of one survey of the Yugoslav social science students' attitudes, conducted by the author of this paper in 1999, 2000 and 2001, testify that in spite of the prolonged aggression against Yugoslav potentially "contagious" alternative strategy of social development, the interest in and preference for participation in decision-making and in collective forms of ownership are still present in the population. The most striking is the detection of such interest and preferences among students that were too young to have had some personal experience of self-management. Throughout the period in which the survey was conducted, preference of "pure" private ownership mode of social relations organization, measured by the acceptance of the statement that private owners should make all the decisions and choose the directors, always remained below 16%.

The abolishment not only of self-managing rights of the employed, but also of their participation rights as well, is institutionalized through the newest laws on privatization and work relations adopted by the Democratic Opposition of Serbia government in 2001. This directly contradicts the survey finding that among students as future employees and potential opinion leaders in their surroundings absolutely prevails the preference for some form of participation of the employed in the decision-making. Even the interest in self-management mode of enterprise organization and social, or at least insider employee share ownership and the right of decision-making based upon it, as measured by acceptance of the statement that the employed should be the owners and that they should choose directors, is rising (from 14% to 21%).

These 1999-2001 findings support the thesis (Vratusa (-Zunjic), Vera, 1999b) that sharpening of the complex economic, political, social and moral worldwide crisis would stimulate the return of the demand for participation in decision-making to the very top of the political programs and actions of social movements and union organizations in former countries of real socialism. In the similar manner economic recession and fiscal crisis of the welfare state in the countries of real capitalism, stimulated a number of researchers and union activists to point out to the democratic

participation of employed as to the main human right based in work and not in property, and therefore consider it to be the strategy of the trade union movement for the 21st century (Kester, G., Pinaud, H., (eds) 1995: 56-71).

These findings also indicate that imposition by the DOS government of the obligatory and outsider model of privatization of state and social property since the autumn 2000 harbors within itself explosive socially conflicting potential.

The mass media under the DOS government control are attempting to dilute this latent conflict by emitting specially created propaganda spots promoting privatization. Young man dressed in metal-worker suit in one commercial thus declares that he is in favor of privatization, because it makes clear who owns what, who works what, and who is responsible for what. Such wording implying monopolization of commanding work functions by the private owner is contrary to clearly expressed desire of absolute majority of surveyed respondents to participate in decision-making in the enterprise.

According to the findings of one earlier research conducted in may 1996 by the Center for politological studies and public opinion in Belgrade on the stratified three level quota sample of 1954 adult citizens of Serbia and Montenegro, this desire to participate in decision-making increased since then. Namely, at the time only 35% of respondents declared that owners and employed should decide together. Further 13% thought that employed should be owners and choose directors, and 10% preferred that the state be the owner and make decisions. Since 1996, therefore, survey results suggest that there came to fall in the preference for organization mode in which private owners manage enterprises and choose directors (22%). Since 1996 there was also reduction in number of respondents without answer (19%) (Kuzmanovic, B., 1997: 177).

Preceding quick review of the present state of implementation and interest in alternatives to neo-liberal variant of the accumulation of capital globalization strategy can serve as the empirical basis for the attempt to assess the future prospects of this strategy. In the shortest, these prospects are promising if the actual and future social movements succeed to avoid the pitfalls of the previous historical attempts at realization of alternatives to global accumulation of capital.

The chances for such avoidance would be enhanced if the interested social movements would consciously address the intrinsic contradictions of both extreme forms of the institutional organization of extended social reproduction. Two such forms have been periodically superseding one another during more than five centuries of capitalist social relations' development, in the role of the dominant form. In one of them the accent is on the private ownership and the market regulation, and in the other on the collective ownership and state regulation. Precisely this cyclical shift in the dominant form of the regulation of capitalist reproduction testifies about the intrinsic limits of the accumulation of capital itself,

as it was demonstrated in preceding paragraphs on the post World War II global, regional and local manifestations of the systemic hyper-accumulation of capital crisis. The attempt to overcome this crisis through the state re-distributive intervention and introduction of the elements of planning of economic processes is structurally limited within dominant capitalist relations by the resistance of capitalists to taxing of their profits. The extreme development of the centrally planned form of the reproduction regulation within command economy maintaining the class division of labor on commanding and executing, as the permanent source of enlarged reproduction of the alienated and alienating social relations of exploitation, repression and unequal distribution of social wealth, power and influence, thwart the efforts to increase the labor productivity. The attempt to overcome the ensuing stagnation through the introduction of the elements of market regulation, leads eventually to the full restoration of capitalist relations that reproduce cyclical crises in the first place.

The partisans of anti- and post-capitalist “non-reformist reforms” of the actually dominant capitalist institutional system argue that these reforms must be carried out through the democratically reached consensus of the great majority of the world population on the self-imposed rules of the social reproduction relations’ regulation. This great majority should actively participate in the conceptualization and implementation of these rules, opening thus the possibility for the overcoming of the contradictions inherent to hierarchical structuration of social institutions that characterizes all contemporary class divided societies. Overcoming of this contradiction must entail such regulation of the decision-making process concerning regulative values and aims of social production, consumption, remuneration of the work done, organization of the work place and of the neighborhood community, that would enable the reduction and in the perspective complete elimination of the class division of labor and private property as its legal expression. Through the persisting efforts in the direction of abolition of this division, only the small minority of the population would be denied the “right” to exploit and repress the great majority of population.

In order to facilitate the achievement of the regulative ideals of solidarity, equity, self-management and development of diversity of human potentials, Albert Michael (Albert, M., 2000) suggests the institutionalization of the remuneration according to actual work effort and sacrifice, establishment of self-managing councils of producers and consumers, promotion of a balanced combination of creative and routine jobs at the work place, as well as the allocation of material and human resources to particular branches of production of goods and services through the participation of all producers and consumers in the participative planning. The main value of this suggestion is the insight that the leading idea of the not-reformist reform of the dominantly capitalist institutions, participatory economy, has some chances to be realized only through the participatory structured institutions. The

basic vision of the aim of the desirable participative organization of human social relations is in this way identified with the participative form of institutionalization of social relations as the only appropriate tool for the realization of this aim.

Similar visions and strategies of globalization of democratic participation are often labeled as utopist by activists of both the establishment and of some streams within the political opposition. Before their facile discarding, it should be taken into consideration that at the beginning of the XXI century, the structural crisis of the accumulation of capital is becoming acute. The transnational capital is again searching the way out of it through massive war destruction of “surplus” production capacities and people, including the use of nuclear weapons having long-term catastrophic consequences for the natural environment and people themselves. Such circumstances impose the need to examine and experiment also with at the first sight utopist strategies of the qualitative transformation of the inherently excluding and wasteful institutions of private property, production for profit, class domination, exploitation and repression of the state apparatus in the service of the accumulation of capital. The most recent new violent attempt of the interested partisans of the totalitarian strategy of the global restoration and maintenance of capitalist social relations, to impose privatization even of natural resources and public services and commodification of all social relations to entire humanity through indirect economic sanctions, arming and infiltrating terrorist groups, and if necessary through direct military intervention and bombing with “mini nukes” of the “rogue” states whose people resist re-colonization and usury debt enslavement, actualizes once again the old dilemma: socialism or barbarism.

Social actors interested in the avoidance of the barbarism and nuclear annihilation may begin their quest for the adequate anti-capitalist social development strategies with the critical analysis of the achievements and limits of the unique and important attempt that lasted several decades in Yugoslavia to transform the main means of production into the property of the entire society and to integrate the planning, controlling and executing work functions. The ideal of simultaneous political, economic and social emancipation has some chances to be realized if it is simultaneously applied on the functional level of the production, through the self-management of producers, as well as on the territorial level, through the self-management of the consumers in the commune. If this double interest of the majority of population is ignored, and the accent is put on only one of them (on maximalization of earnings and social services, on the one hand, or on the minimization of prices and taxes on the other, capitalist relation remain dominant, together with the accompanying forms of the fetishism of the production of merchandises, alienation and social disintegration (Vratusa (-Zunjic), V., 2000).

Beside the articulation of the clear alternative vision of the globalization of democratic participation and self-management, indispensable are as well the courage

and ability to mobilize and self-organize the interested supporters with the aim to realize this vision. It is vitally important to avoid the degeneration of such political organization from the tool of emancipation, into a tool of enslavement, due to authoritarian bureaucratization.

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